

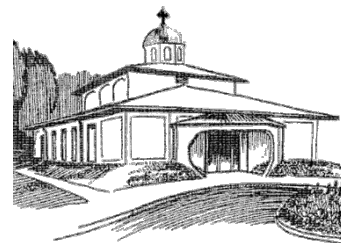


St Nicholas Orthodox Church

*A Parish of the Diocese of the Midwest
of the Orthodox Church in America*

9650 Johnnycake Ridge Road, Mentor, OH 44060

<https://saintnicholas-oca.org/>



Parish Rector: Fr Mark Therrien + (252) 813-6993 + fr.mark.therrien@gmail.com



Services & Events for the Week Starting March 3, 2024

- Sunday, March 3** *Sunday of the Prodigal Son, Tone 6*
(1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Luke 15:11-32)
9:00a Church School || 9:45a Third Hour
10:00a Prayers at the Making of a Catechumen & Divine Liturgy || Coffee hour
- Wednesday, March 6** 7:30p Class for catechumens (*open to all*)
- Friday, March 8** 9:30a Home-school co-op || 6:30p General *Panikhida*
- Saturday, March 9** *Memorial Saturday*
9:00a Divine Liturgy || 4:30p Confessions || 5:30p Great Vespers
- Sunday, March 10** *Sunday of Meatfare, Tone 7*
(Readings: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2; Matthew 25:31-46)
9:00a Church School
9:45a Third Hour || 10:00a Divine Liturgy || Coffee hour



Stewardship for February 25, 2024

Operating: \$3,449; ZOE: \$25; Maintenance: \$65;
Holy Day: \$10; Icons: \$25; Diocesan Dues: \$139;
Candles: \$52; Uganda: \$90; Parish Charities: \$65;
Seminary: \$10

“Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable temple . . .”
(from the final petition of the Augmented Litany)

Thank you for your generosity!



NOTES FROM THE RECTOR

“Be Still and Know that I am God”

A Catechesis on Maintaining Silence in the Temple

As some might have noticed (or experienced) last week, the adult church school class has now started to meet in the fellowship hall rather than in the nave of our temple.

Having spoken to Ted in thinking about this change, I

decided on it for a few reasons. First, even though a church school class is obviously a good thing to have, nevertheless the temple space, in my view, should normally be reserved for those activities that it is primarily intended for: namely, personal prayer and the liturgical services of the church. Of course, sometimes—especially in younger churches where separate spaces for education are lacking—this is not always feasible (as it was not feasible in our parish for many years). But since there is now enough space in the fellowship hall for the class, and since the kitchen can be closed off so as to keep noise down, I decided to move it.

Second, as I’ve learned over the past month and a half or so in my conversations with many of you while blessing your homes, many people in this parish have questions about proper church etiquette. I plan to address some of these questions and concerns over the coming Fast. But by way of starting to work in that direction, I decided to move the class so that, when people come to church on early Sunday morning, the first experience of the temple that they have is one of quietness and silence. In part, I have a personal stake in this: I find it very difficult to focus during Proskomedie if there is much else going on. This is one of the reasons why I have always had the practice of trying to

finish Proskomedie before beginning Matins or the Hours. But beyond my own desire for that quietness, I think that preserving this atmosphere will be good for anyone who wants to come early to pray in preparation for Divine Liturgy. After all, as we read in the Psalm verse that I've included at the beginning of these remarks today: To know God, we must first learn to "be still." This is also the reason why I have started to announce at communion time the need to maintain a proper atmosphere of prayer in the temple especially when the Gifts are being distributed.



This Week: Fasting & Preparing

This week we return to our regular fasting on Wednesday and Friday. And of course, next Sunday is Meat-fare: the last day to consume meat products before Pascha. With that in mind, then, I know that I have said this already, but I want to say it again in order to be emphatic about it: As we come closer and closer to the beginning of the Fast, we must become more and more serious about preparing ourselves for the days ahead of us. On this point, in thinking about the importance of this task, I want to share some brief comments from the *Life of St Antony the Great*:

"From the Scriptures Anthony learned that the treacheries of the enemy are numerous, and he practiced the discipline [*ascesis*] with intensity, realizing that although his foe had not been powerful enough to beguile him with bodily pleasure, he would surely attempt to entrap him by some other method, for the demon is a lover of sin. More and more then he mortified the body and kept it under subjection, so that he would not, after conquering some challenge, trip up in others. So he made plans to accustom himself more to the stringent practices, . . . (trans. Gregg)

For me, the key line in this excerpt is the one that I underlined: Although being a tremendous ascetic, St Antony never considered his ample experience as a reason to pride himself as being some kind of spiritual expert or guru who could just improvise in his spiritual struggles. Rather, precisely because he understood the real nature of those struggles from his experience, St Antony knew that success in struggle takes effort and planning. This is probably obvious to us from our own daily experiences: What worthwhile project is there that does not require planning and forethought? And of course, we have the Lord's own admonitions on this point (see e.g. Luke 14:28). Just as in our lives in the world, then, so too in our spiritual lives: We have to be intentional in thinking about the direction that we will be taking. If not, we will find ourselves unprepared for the Fast when it comes. So, in looking ahead, what will we be doing? What books might we read? How might we give alms? What are we doing to plan so that we can keep the fast days?



Parish Prayer List

If you know of someone who is in special need of prayer, please email me so that I might add the person to the prayer list. In the meantime, please remember especially:

Perry Capitan, Julian, Sarah Crivella, Joella (LuAnn Dzura's daughter), **Emily Finazzo**, (friend of the Rendas), **David Campbell** (Debbie Clements' brother), **Patrick Leahy** (Dave K.'s brother-in-law), **Rick Wagner** (Merrick and Mia's grandfather), **Bruce** (Kristen Moore's father), **Joseph Chuppa, Ronald** (in baptism, **Thomas**) (Collin Moore's father), **Bruce** (Kristen Moore's father), **Mary Ann Sheranko, Helen** (Jan Ursinyi's mother), **Kevin, Declan, and Teagon** (husband and children of the newly-reposed Kristen), **Christina** (Mike Brzozowski's sister), **Alan, LuAnn Dzura, Rich Cook** (Cindy Renda's brother), **Elizabeth** (Denise Busch's aunt), **Bruno Christani, Daniel Conger** (friend of Jim Renda), **Kathy Thomas** (Fr Mark's aunt); **the residents of St Herman's House, as well as those who serve them;** our seminarian, **Cole (Paul) Schlafer**, and his family members: **Sarah, Simon, Michael, & Nikolai;** the members of the **Bagley family, especially Joseph, Rosemary, Isaac, Lucia, & Julian;** **Jim Barkas;** **the suffering Christians of Ukraine, the Middle East, and Armenia**

Birthdays this week: 3/3: Francis Janek, Naomi Sherman; 3/4: Jessica Murphy; 3/8: Michelle Shroeder, TJ Chongris, Elena Nicoletti

Anniversary of chrismation: 3/4 Maureen Medakovich

Expecting: Greg & Grace, Jairus & Riley, Weston & Rachel, Joseph & Venessa, Jon & Alexandra, Patrick & Katherine, Jake & Allison Szendrey

Catechumens: Dalton Moses, Nick & Abrea Monda, Alex Wittie

Newly departed: Paris Anthony Santone (Debbie Covelli's nephew), **Joseph Demanski, Cathy Ubancic** (friend of the Rendas), **Patricia** (Michael Abernathy's grandmother), **Nun Elizabeth** (of Holy Transfiguration Monastery), **Kristen** (Michelle Hoover's cousin), **Jane Hunt** (great grandmother of Sofia Kiernan), **Patricia Wilcoxson** (Rosemary Bagley's mother); **Joseph Naymik**



Catechesis This Wednesday

This coming Wednesday, March 6, I will meet with our catechumens. Our topic will be the dynamic of death and resurrection in Christian life. We will look at Genesis 37-50 read in tandem with some patristic texts. *Although part of the formation for our catechumens, this class is open to everyone.*